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# YOUTH NEWSLETTER

No. 8 June, 1982

## PEACE?

EDITORIAL -- by Alf Idland

- What are the issues that you often talk about and discuss? -

I put the question to a group of very young people in the German Democratic Republic. PEACE - was the answer which became a starting point for more than two hours of sharing together the whole question of peace and nuclear war. And for me it developed into one of the strongest experiences I have ever had - in sensing the deep and genuine concern for peace among these young people in spite of the fact that the authorities were very suspicious about their peace activities, in realizing that wearing the "peace badge" for them could lead to very unpleasant situations.

The concern for peace of these young people was far more than just a fade thing - as some cynics have accused the peace movements of the West to profit from. And even if the peace movement can be labeled as fade - I wonder whether the tremendous interest for the whole question of peace is not simply an expression of the deep anxiety that lies within millions of people today. The fear has burst into the open, and even so politicians including some theologians do not seem to be able to interpret the signs of our time. It is very easy, especially for Lutherans, to escape from the issue by hiding behind the so-called Two-Kingdoms Doctrine and conclude that the church is not so speak politcally.

No - the church cannot offer absolute political solutions. But to say that the church should not be involved when our whole existence is at stake - "to be or not to be" - that is nothing less than a betrayal of a younger generation looking forward to a future that may not be. On the contrary, I think that the church even has a lot to say. It should be involved - not as a political party - but as the church it is - speaking a message with implications for our individual and collective life.

Do we dare to take up the challenge - expressed by Christians in the GDR - whether the cross does not preach to us about a readiness of giving up some of our own security to make the one who feels insecure and threatened, more secure and safe?

Do we dare to take up the challenge from the message of Esaiah whose words against military alliances must have sounded as absurd then as any similar talk in our situation. The prophet might have put troubling questions to our looking for security in NATO or the Warsaw pact.

Does our faith in Christ mean a oneness as humans before the belonging to a nation? The Falkland/Malvinas conflict has given a sad example of how people tend to be nationalists - and some of us would say "crazy in their nationalism" - before being what we all are: persons.

And finally - what does the commandment of love speak into a situation where incredible amounts of money are put into weaponry while millions are starving? How can the church - how can we - keep quiet?

"For the love of Christ leaves us no choice..."

A BIG THANK YOU AGAIN GOES TO KARIN KAUKORAT FOR HELPING US WITH THE TYPING.

HER HELP IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

# YOUTH NEED TO BE CONSCIENTIZED AND ORGANIZED; SAYS ASIAN RURAL YOUTH WORKER

"There is a need for young people to be conscientized and organized; youth have to be mobilized on issues that affect them or their countries," June Rodriguez told Youth Newsletter in March on return from a trip to Latin America. June, who is responsible for the Singapore-based Christian Conference of Asia's (CCA) rural youth program, took part in a World Council of Churches (WCC) youth team visit to Latin America, which included a one-week conference in Peru with more than 200 young Latin Americans from 23 countries. "We discovered that we live in similar situations and that we have to face similar problems such as poverty," said June, who comes from the Philippines. She noted that the conference discussed possibilities for building closer links between youth in Asia and Latin America. June said that it is very often the youth who are concerned about changes in their countries and that it is thus "important to build up solidarity among youth" all over the world.

June pointed out that the problems of Asia predominantly concentrate on rural areas, where there is mainly agriculture. She noted that one of the biggest problems is the increasing militarization in Asia. Other issues that affect Asian youth, which she mentioned, were human rights and feudalism. Human rights are violated in almost all Asian countries, she said. Referring to the question of feudalism she said that there are still big landlords in Asia. A consequence of this is that many people do not own their land. Another problem are the big multinationals dominating the industries, which makes it very difficult for small-scale industries to survive.

During the interview with Youth Newsletter June referred to two booklets, published by the CCA Youth Committee. In one of them CCA staffer Fong Meng Soon explains the conception of the CCA's rural youth program. He writes, "The CCA youth committee attempting to bring about more relevant participation of Christian youth in Asian concerns critically observed that in the post-colonial era few of the church related projects have moved beyond the concept of charity in their social concerns. Gravely ignoring the historical roots of oppression and poverty these projects were uncritically designed to foster short term relief and welfare type operations which unwittingly served to complement the existing structures of economic exploitation and political domination.

"Although Asian societies are predominantly rural and youth commonly suffer from abject poverty due to acute income disparities, increasing landlessness and tenacy, very little attention was given to this program that would realistically bring about structural changes to correct this inhuman state of affairs.

"Therefore in 1975 the Rural Youth Program was conceived as a concrete response to the growing need of encouraging and supporting youth leadership and participation in the struggle for justice and liberation."

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Fong Meng Soon notes that among the objectives of the rural youth program are to train a cadre of commited and disciplined rural youth workers and organizers, and to help develop and sharpen techniques of conscientization and community organizations among rural youth. He also points out that as the countries in which the program is effective suffer from post-independence neo-colonial domination "very little has changed and, if anything, rural poverty has intensified over the years." The program now includes projects in India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Korea and Burma.

(Note: More information can be obtained from the Christian Conference of Asia youth secretary, 480 Lorong 2, Tao Payoh, Singapore 1231.)

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## PASTOR SAYS TRAINING IN YOUTH WORK TO MOLD FUTURE OF TAIWAN CHURCH

The Rev. Charles Li sees his forthcoming assignment as one which will definitely have an effect on the future of the China Evangelical Lutheran Church. "If there is no training for youth work, our church has no hope, no future," says Li, who will become the Taiwan church's first director of youth.

Currently pastor of Spiritual Grace Church in Tou Liu, Li has spent the past seven months in the United States studying how youth ministry is conducted in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Part of his stay included six months with Zion Lutheran Church in Hopkins, Minnesota, where he was involved in activities of the congregation, the circuit, and the Minnesota South District. During the latter part of his visit, he toured Missouri Synod headquarters in St. Louis and met youth staff. He also visited Trinity Lutheran Church in Chicago which contributed funds to support his training in the United States.

Li commented about a generation gap in the Taiwan church where the average pastor is 60 years old. His hope is to provide training in youth work with the goal of establishing a professional full time worker in each of the four districts of the church. During the next 10 years, Li said, the China Evangelical Lutheran Church also hopes to establish youth centers in major cities of Taipei, Taichung, and another location.

"Young people see the church as not belonging to them," said Li. "My first work will be to teach young people how to become involved--to let them know that if you'll be a Christian you'll be involved in church, especially in Sunday services." "Our congregations are not poor, but there are not many members," Li commented, "so if they want to grow, they have to learn outreach to help them enjoy God's work." (LCMS Reporter)

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## CHURCHES MUST FACE THE PEACE ISSUE, EAST GERMAN SAYS

The churches cannot evade the issue of peace, they have to face it, the Rev. Günter Krusche told the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) Commission on Studies at its annual meeting held in the German Democratic Republic April 19-24. Krusche, chairman of the commission said, "We cannot close our eyes to the reality of the world."

The East German theologian said, "The policy of détente has suffered additional setbacks. The events in Poland further promote polarized thinking. The adjournment of the Madrid follow-up conference of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSSE) demonstrates the inability of giving first place to common concerns. Armaments continue to spiral upwards." The really burning issues concerning Third World Development are being repressed, he said.

Krusche, who is a lecturer of practical theology in East Berlin, stressed that in spite of encouraging events such as the peace demonstrations in Bonn and Amsterdam, the World Council of Churches' public hearing in Amsterdam last Nov. and the numerous peace initiatives of the churches, including the GDR, "helplessness spreads because with all the proofs of a will to peace on all sides, there is deep-set disagreement as to how to achieve it." He pointed out that the churches are also confronted by this reality. The advocacy of peace must be in the center of our witness, he said.

Krusche pointed out that a major focus of the next LWF assembly to be held in Budapest, Hungary, 1984, will be the topic of youth and the church. "We hope that many Eastern European youth will be present at the assembly to become familiar with the world-wide church through practical experience," he said. Krusche reminded the commission, which is the governing committee for the Geneva-based department, of how much the East German youth are commited to the peace issue and the great hopes they set on the ecumenical movement. He greeted GDR youth representatives attending the meeting, saying, "We are dependent on their advice." (Lutheran World Information)

## PEACE IN EAST GERMANY: WORD OF THE BIBLE AT CENTER OF PUBLIC CONTROVERSY

A few months ago some young people in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) started wearing a patch with the Biblical passage "swords into ploughshares." (Micah 4) This biblical word is imprinted on the foot of a monument that the Soviet Union gave to the United Nations in New York. In a number of cases this peace-oriented phrase has led to conflicts with the state and school authorities. In late March the East German government banned the wearing of the patch saying that it has been "misused by youths to express a way of thinking hostile to the state and to participate in an illegal movement."

One of the most significant facts in these recent developments in the GDR has been the massive public support of the Protestant

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churches for the young Christians who publically show their involvement for peace. In April six of the eight Protestant churches issued letters and declarations protesting the massive action that the East German authorities have taken against the peace patch. In a resolution the synod of the Church of Mecklenburg said, "Although our words on peace and the attempts to venture out on new ground as Christians can cause opposition, we consider ourselves citizens of our state whose efforts towards disarmament and peace we want to support actively." By the ban against the carrying of this "symbol that expresses so well the world-wide will to peace," trust is destroyed and domestic peace is threatened, it said.

Another synod meeting in Saxony noted the ban of the Micah quote "with deep dismay." The synod called the measures of the GDR government against youths carrying the peace symbol a "serious mistake." It pointed out to the consequences threatened by the government for young people who refuse to remove the patch from their clothes. The state threatens them with expansion from schools or the loss of an apprenticeship, which threatens their further development, it said. In a letter to Protestant youths the Saxon synod said that the government ban "emphatically destroys the trust of these young people."

The East German Protestant churches first used the symbol for their peace decade last November. Especially young Christians saw in it an expressive sign of their attempts to promote disarmament and peace based on a Christian conviction and they made it known in public. Informed church sources told the news agency Reuters in April that the church's strong support for the people wearing the badge has led to fears that it may be accused of fostering a dissident movement. East Berlin Bishop Gottfried Forck warned his synod in April that the church's support for those refusing to do military service and calling for disarmament was being misunderstood. In this connection Forck referred to the "Berlin appeal" which was launched in February by East German pastors Rainer Eppelmann and others, including late dissident communist philosopher Robert Havemann. It calls for dismantling of nuclear weapons and withdrawal of foreign troops from both East and West Germany. Forck said the way it has been picked up in the Western press has led to a point where "other church initiatives for peace are from the beginning exposed to strong suspicion by state authorities." Only after the appeal was published in the Western press were there state actions against those wearing the peace badge during the month of February, he said.

GDR Defense Minister Heinz Hoffman declared in the Volkskammer (parliament) in East Berlin on March 25: "One day we should very much like to scrap our weapons, but at the moment socialism needs both our ploughshares and our swords." The government has already refused a "social peace service" for conscientious objectors and countered the campaign "make peace without weapons" by an action of the Communist state youth that supports peace with weapons. Late last year young people had sent petitions to the regional churches asking for support of their demands to introduce a "social peace service" instead of military service. Most of the eight Protestant churches later stated their support for these demands.

Another church-backed action in February was a peace forum held at the Dresden Kreuzkirche. It was attended by about 4,000 mostly young people.

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Church representatives, including the bishop of Saxony, Johannes Hempel, had to answer some tough questions at the peace forum, in which worries about the pre-military training of youth as well as military education in schools in the GDR were expressed.

Gerhard Thomas, chief editor of the Mecklenburg church paper, in a comment on the controversy on the Bible word wrote that "it would be bad if Christians and Marxists were to clash on a symbol of peace in a way that instead of sensible talks on the issue only mutual prejudices and accusations or suspisions would determine the scene." Thomas also notes that Christians would misunderstand the word of the prophet if they take it for a formula to secure peace almost overnight. He writes, "Those wanting peace must remain willing to enter a dialogue, which at first has to take place in one's own country and one's own society...The dialogue, talking to each other, is a form of peace. We should practice this in our own house to keep our credibility as peacemakers outside our house." (Based on reports in Lutheran World Information)

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## LUTHERAN STUDENT MOVEMENT-USA TO HOLD SUMMER CONFERENCE

Four hundred or more students from across the United States will gather in August for the 14th Annual National Assembly of the Lutheran Student Movement-USA.

Theme for the conference this year is "Once Upon A Word:Telling Our Stories As God's People". Rev. Walt Wangerin, author of the highly praised story, The Book of the Dun Cow, will be the featured speaker and storyteller. Rev. Phil Schroeder, advisor to LSM-USA says "the theme is meant to suggest that we all have our stories (that is our lives) and God has a story which is large enough to embrace all our stories".

In addition to Wangerin's presentations there will be discussion groups on many current issues and topics, a variety of worship services, plenary business sessions and lots of time to share stories with other students.

Site for the assembly this year is Edinboro, Pennsylvania which is located 15 miles south of Lake Erie. The assembly begins Monday afternoon, August 16 and continues through Saturday morning, August 21, 1982. Registrations should be sent to the Chicago Office by July 15.

Some scholarship money is available to cover the cost of registration for any OVERSEAS STUDENTS who may wish to attend the gathering. For more information, contact: Mike Sharp, 35 E. Wacker Dr., Suite 1847, Chicago, IL 60601.

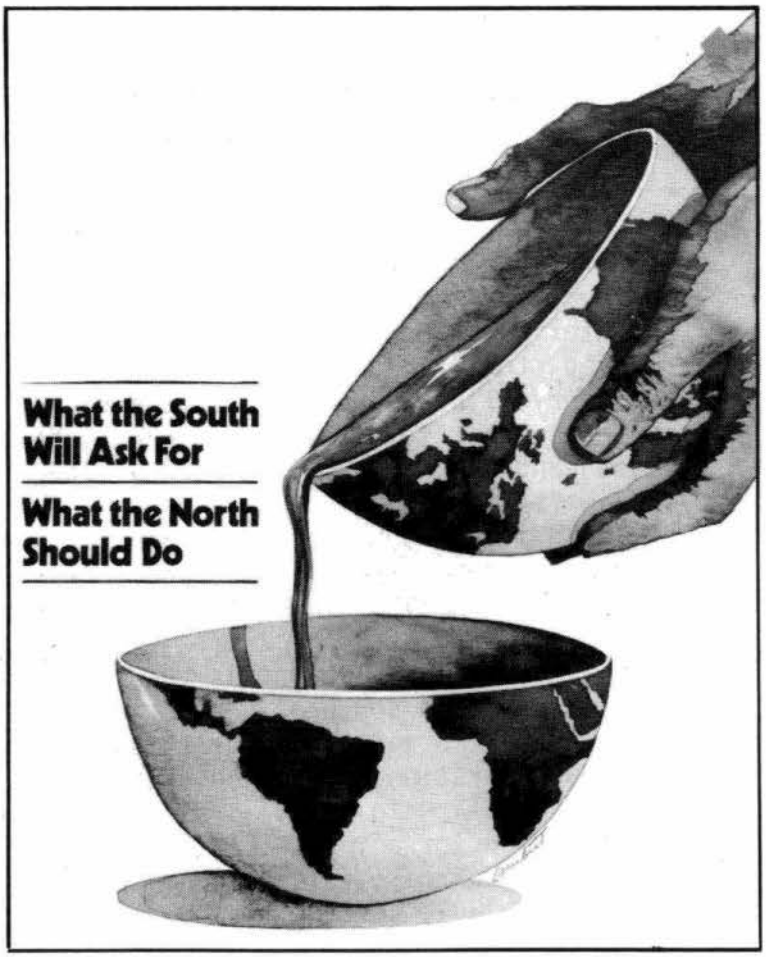
Nancy Larson

# "IN CHRIST--HOPE FOR THE WORLD"

by Péter Gáncs

(Peter, from Hungary, is the permanent youth advisor to the Lutheran World Federation's Commission of World Service. A commission is the governing committee for the Geneva-based department and meets once a year. This year the meeting was held in Divonne, France, from April 26-30)

In connection with the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) next assembly, to be held in Budapest, Hungary, in 1984, we all have the same task: We have to understand the main them of the assembly, "In Christ--hope for the world." We feel especially bound to do that as the Lutheran Church in Hungary will host the assembly. Our youth conferences to be held this summer at Lake Balaton will deal with HOPE as a main subject: personal hope, hope of the church and hope for the world.




I would like to report about my experience at the annual meeting of the LWF's Commission on World Service in Divonne, France. This commission can really take the motto as its own as its work can be summarized as following: working actively in the world bound to Christ and with hope from God. But what does this world mean to us, where can the suffering be found? And how can we heal the world's wounds? The meeting was looking for answers to these serious questions. The world was "brought" to our sessions, held in a luxury hotel (What a great contradiction!) through reports slides, photos and films. The LWF/World Service carries out a gigantic task with unconditional love that embraces the whole world. In spite of this I have some questions, which I would like to report about.

How long can we ease the misery of the world with aids? The gap between the rich and the poor becomes bigger and bigger. According to figures from the September 1981 edition of the Development Education Forum, published by the desk for research and social action, "in 1900 the average person in the rich world had four times as much as the person in the poor world, by 1970 the ratio

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had become 40 to 1. Today the pay rise that an American can expect per year is bigger than that an Indian can expect in 100 years."

Does the bread we give solve the basic problem of the poor or is it only for the sake of our conscience? And where is the bread of life, or as the motto of the next World Council of Churches assembly says for the life of the world: Jesus Christ?!?! What is the connection, the order between mission and the diaconic work of the church?

I ask you to consider these questions and write your opinion on them to us!

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## YOUNG PEOPLE MUST PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNICATION

"As young people seek to confirm their identity, the types of communication we advocate are those with a high degree of participation, for example radio programs that welcome telephone calls and letters, workshops on the use and creation of casette tapes for small group discussions, other small-scale media and magazines." This is an exerpt from a statement of the five youth delegates, who attended this year's meeting of the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) Commission on Communication. (The commission is a governing body for the Geneva-based department of communication.) The youth delegates told the commission that communication must be attractive to youth and that this can best be done when youth themselves actively participate in it, e.g. by access to training, production, decision-making and by sharing responsibility.

The youth delegates came from the United States, Brazil, Denmark and the German Democratic Republic. Unfortunately there was no participation from Africa and Asia; one reason being that an Ethiopian delegate had visa problems. The youth delegates presented the commission with a series of resolutions among them one encouraging greater emphasis on youth involvement in church communication projects. They said, "As church concepts and languages seem to have missed reaching most youth, young people need new contemporary interpretation of Christianity (i.e., an understanding of the gospel as a life-style and not only a congregational event.)"

Bridges have to be extended across the generation gap, the youth delegates said. They added, "This means that communication with youth should not always be isolated but also integrated into communication projects for people of all age groups. Through communication youth should be led to the church and integrated into its life. This would benefit both the church and the youth."

The young people at the meeting in Brazil also spent time discussing the rôle of the LWF youth desk and the youth newsletter. Among the recommendations they made was that the Youth Newsletter "be improved in its layout, its choice of languages, its content, its suitability for different groups and its editorial purposes." This would make it more useful and attractive to youth, they said.

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The commission supported the plans for a youth gathering to be held prior to the next LWF assembly in Hunagry in 1984. The department of communication was asked to see to it that there is some communication angle at the pre-assembly youth gathering.

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## WHAT DOES YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNICATION MEAN ?

by Laurids Korsgaard

(Laurids, from Denmark, is the permanent youth advisor to the LWF's Commission on Communication.)

What does it mean to involve youth in the kind of communication that takes place in and comes from the churches and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)? Both youth and communication are concepts which have been difficult for the churches to place in their structures. They can and may not be isolated from church activities and institutions. They belong to church life as integral and vital parts. Since it is difficult to identify the concepts of youth and communication it may have been even more difficult for the annual meeting of the LWF's Commission on Communication in Brazil in May to combine them--especially as the outcome of the meeting was to lead to practical involvement of youth in communication.

*Youth delegates to the LWF's Commission on Communication meeting in Brazil in May: (from left to right) Donna Hertzfeld (U.S.A.); Michael von Hintzenstern (East Germany); Iria Gertz (Brazil); Laurids Korsgaard (Denmark) and Anelise Wagner (Brazil).*

PHOTO by Roger Kahle, English Editor of Lutheran World Information.

The exchange of experience in the youth sub-committee at the meeting disclosed that in Lutheran churches very little is done to involve youth in communication. The churches do little to make youth aware of media. We found that mass media often do more to broaden the generation gap than they actually do to extend bridges across it. This happens partly by talking down to youth from above, partly by isolating youth items in special programs and magazines or simply by ignoring youth items and porblems in communication. We agreed that it would benefit both the church and youth if their concerns become a fully integrated part of church communication with the purpose of inviting youth into the

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the community of the church.

At the meeting it was a widespread feeling that we know too little about youth participating in communication. More knowledge and efforts are necessary to involve youth in the communication process.The Geneva-based department of communication will therefore in the future investigate communication project holders involve youth in their projects with regard to decision-making, producing, training and awareness building. Based on experience from that research survey it should be possible to make good use of resources earmarked for youth concerns.

Young communicators have a special need for training. Therefore it was decided that special attention be given to the use of the LWF's Communication Training Fund (CTF) for youth communicators.

The main outcome of the meeting in Brazil is that the department of communication will now pay more attention to the needs of youth for participatory communication when consulting and funding projects. Through this it can be avoided that the word "youth concerns" will be limited to a bureaucratic catchword for things happening or kept in archives in Geneva. The commission decided to encourage LWF member churches to develop group media and small-scale media projects, which in particular help youth communicate with their peers in and outside of the church.

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## WHAT IN THE (LUTHERAN) WORLD IS A YOUTH INTERN ?

In 1980 Susanne Kasch from West Germany joined the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) department of studies as the first official YOUTH INTERN. Since then a number of other young people have stayed for some months as youth interns here in Geneva at the LWF's headquarters. You might be wondering what exactly is a youth intern? According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary the word "intern" means "to confine or impound, especially during a war." Even though some of the youth interns might have felt like they were being confined to serve as someone providing youth imput or a youthful contribution to the LWF, the second definition in the dictionary is probably more appropriate: "An advanced student or graduate usually in a professional field gaining supervised practical experience." One of the objectives of the internship program is precisely that, namely "to give young people an opportunity to develop skills within a department when it is possible to combine their educational background or work experience with projects, studies and program activities of the department and the LWF as a whole."

Why do we make the effort and write such a, probably boring, article? The answer is very simple: We want to let as many people as possible know about this program so that some of the mistakes made in the past can be avoided. One of these mistakes has been that those people who have had the opportunity to be a youth intern have been a few lucky ones who happened to know somebody from the LWF staff or somebody who is influential in the staff or has special connections to Geneva. This "nepotism business" can be avoided if many people

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know about the program and apply. Then the youth desk and the youth task force have the possibility to distribute internships on a more equal and fair basis.

Another difficulty has been that all interns sofar have either come from the powerful German church or from Asia. It is vitally important that some youth from especially Africa and Latin America now get the chance to come to Geneva. Oroginally the purpose of the youth internship program was to expose young people to the work of the LWF. One fo the frequent frustrations of those who have been here has been that there was no particular task or relevant project to which they could commit themselves. It does get a bit boring after a while if all that you do is meet people and read literature connected to the church. A consequence of this is that the staff here now tries to come up with specific plans or tasks for youth interns before they come. Of course the success of an internship also depends very much on the initiative and interest of of the interns themselves. In order to give you some more details we are publishing the guidelines of an internship. If you are in any way interested, please write, or even better apply to the LWF youth desk, 150 route de FErney, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

To end this article, just a few words about the youth intern situation at the moment. Hans-Christoph Hermes, a young West German theologian, left Geneva at the end of May. We don't know how he himself would evaluate his intership. All we can say is that he was a great help in putting together this newsletter. His written contributions and especially his words of wisdom in sometimes controversial and heated discussions on editorial policies were greatly appreciated and are missed. We wish him all the best for the future. Also recently Miriam Chiu from Hong Kong spent a few orientation weeks in Geneva, before she flew to Tanzania for her internship with the refugee service there. We also wish her lots of success. Other news: The department of studies is actively looking for an intern from Africa, and the department of communication has somebody from Latin America in mind. Again, if you happen to be from Africa and LAtin America, acts as fast as possible !

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INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN SWEDISH YOUTH GATHERING.

The Church of Sweden Youth Organization is holding a big youth gathering August 2-8, 1982 in Skövde, near Göteborg. The theme is "Peace now". The first part will be in the form of workshops with drama, music, international discussion groups before the main gathering from August 4 to 8. When the gathering is over there is an option to stay with a family in a ongregation in the diocese of Skara, August 8-15. With regard to the peace theme we found it important to cooperate in securing also some international participation to this youth gathering. At present youth from Nigeria, Indonesia, Malaysia and India are scheduled to take part.

(Youth Desk Notes)

YOUTH INTERNSHIP WITH THE LWF

The LWF Sixth Assembly in Dar es Salaam (1977) resolved to request the Executive Committee to establish a youth desk with a youth advisory committee, identifying one of the desk's tasks to be that of integrating youth in the LWF. Consequently an Interdepartmental Staff Task Force on Youth and Students was established with terms of reference which included advising the LWF departments and units on implementing the 1978 decision of the Executive Committee to involve youth interns in the LWF as a form of in-service leadership development.

In 1980 an internship program, lodged administratively within the Department of Church Cooperation, commenced with participation by several departments. In 1981 the LWF International Youth Consultation at Stift Urach, Federal Republic of Germany, commended the internship program and affirmed its objectives. The LWF Executive Committee then acknowledged the importance of the program and also encouraged the Department of Church Cooperation to create a youth desk as soon as possible so as to facilitate coordination of the internship program among other tasks. This desk was created in October 1981.

In order to foster an opportunity for youth internships, and in concert with the Terms of Reference of the Task Force on Youth and Students, the following objectives and guidelines have been established:

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide the possibility for young people to involve themselves in the work of the LWF and thus get to know how the LWF works and functions so they may have the opportunity to become links of contact between the LWF and the local churches.

2. To provide the LWF with resource persons who can contribute, especially in the field of LWF youth and student involvement.

3. To give young people an opportunity to develop skills within a department when it is possible to combine their educational background or work experience with projects, studies and program activities of the department and the LWF as a whole.

4. To provide an international ecumenical experience for youth so that they may be better equipped to contribute to the life and work of the Church from a universal perspective.

GUIDELINES

1. Age: Interns should be below 30 years of age.

2. Civil status: Preferably interns should be single.

3. Languages: Interns should have a working knowledge of English. Knowledge of German, French, Spanish, Portuguese or a Scandinavian language would be useful.

4. Other qualifications: Interns should have completed their basic professional training, normally a college/university or comparable degree in an appropriate field of study. A basic understanding of Christian faith and active participation in church life are necessary.

5. Church endorsement: An intern should have the endorsement of an LWF member church.

6. Financial arrangements: Travel to Geneva and return home via the most direct route, health and accident insurance and a monthly allowance sufficiently covering living expenses during the time of the internship will be paid by the LWF youth internship program.

7. Application and selection procedure: Applications for youth internships are to be made directly to the department or office where applicants wish to serve, or to the youth coordinator. Copies of all such applications should be shared among the departments and the youth coordinator. The latter should also be the coordinator of information about departmental internship possibilities as well as information about possible applicants.

   The final selection of the youth intern, whether their internship is financed by DCC or otherwise, is to be made by the department after the matter has been referred to the Youth Task Force for consideration and recommendation.

   The responsibility for all practical arrangements in connection with the intern coming and staying in Geneva is to be shared by the department and the youth coordinator.

8. Duration of internship: An internship will last between three to 12 months as mutually agreed upon by the intern and the host department or office.

9. Expectations: In addition to those activities mutually agreed upon by the department or office and the intern, all interns:

   a. will be asked to attend the meetings and participate in the work of the Interdepartmental Task Force on Youth and Students,

   b. should be introduced to the other departments and offices of the LWF by the host department or office as soon as possible to facilitate the intern's orientation and have an opportunity to become familiar with interdepartmental concerns,

   c. will seek to keep before the host department or office the concerns of youth vis-à-vis the work of the department or office,

   d. may, to the extent that funds allow, be able to attend outside meetings related to the work of the host department, office of the LWF, and

   e. should prepare a report on his/her experience in the internship with the LWF, a copy of which should be sent to the intern's home church and, where applicable, national committee.

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## YOUTH DESK NOTES - by Alf Idland

### YOUTH LEADERS' CONFERENCES IN ASIA

The preparations for the North East Asia conference in Taipei are well under way - coordinated by the local preparatory committee with Peter Yang as chairperson and Ulla Christiansen as secretary. The response from some churches has been unfortunately slow, so it seems that the number of participants will be slightly lower than anticipated. The conference will be held at a beautiful place called Tan Shui Education Center, August 14-19, 1982.

Also the preparations for the other conference, which is going to take place in Madras August 3-13, 1982, are progressing. The local preparatory committee is at work with the new Youth Director of the UELCI as chairperson, Augustine Jeyakumar. The conference which will have participants from India, Malaysia and the Philippines, will focus its attention on two main issues: Human Development and Development of Leadership Skills.

The conference will start as a two days' "stay in" for the participants in areas where groups are involved in the development of their community. In six groups they will go to different areas, and then come back to Gurukul, Madras, for further reflection on their experience before the conference program continues.

Under 'Human Development' the following aspects will be dealt with: the question of what development is, issues in development, both global and regional, strategies in development and the mission of the church and development. Development of leadership skills will be looked at divided into the following sub-themes: organizational skills, interpersonal relations, the question of how to motivate, and program planning. Anybody interested in more information about this conference can write to: Rev. Augustine Jeyakumar, Gurukul Campus, 98 Purasawalkam High Road, Kilpauk, Madras 600 010, India.

### YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCES

In festive speeches youth participation may be emphasized as very important. Not always so in real life - which most lists of delegates to LWF conferences and consultations prove. Even when churches are invited to nominate a youth as delegate they obviously do not feel embarrassed in responding by sending a bishop. In order to try and secure a proper participation of young people in various conferences, the youth desk is presently cooperating also with other departments for this purpose.

For the consultation on "COORDINATION OF LUTHERAN EFFORTS FOR PEACE" - sponsored by the Department of Studies - to be held July 5-12, 1982 at Chavanod in France - at least five young people will be among the delegates - from Canada, USA, Finland and Sweden.

The Department of Studies is also sponsoring a conference on "THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN NATION BUILDING" in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, September 2-7, 1982. The following churches have been invited also to send a youth: Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cameroon, Malagasy Lutheran Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa and Ovambokavango Evangelical Lutheran Church.
We plan to come back with reporting on these events in later issues.

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE PRE-ASSEMBLY YOUTH GATHERING

The preparatory committee is nearly complete and I hope to be able to publish the names in the next issue of our newsletter. A first meeting is set for October 16-23, 1982, here in Geneva.

## YOUNG SOVIETS INCREASINGLY USE RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

MOSCOW More and more young people in the Soviet Union decorate their apartments with icons, wear necklaces with a cross, marry in church and have their children baptized. Despite this the press is denying a religious "renaissance" in the Soviet Union. Official statements say that atheism remains "one of the characteristics of the spiritual life of the Soviet people." Everything else is dismissed as temporary fashion and an accompanying phenomenon of the fundamental process of rooting an atheistic and materialistic ideology. But fashion does not explain everything. Even the government publication Iswestija recently asked for the deeper meaning of certain increasing phenomena: Why do members of the comunist youth and party baptize their children? How can the wearing of crosses and the celebration of marriages in the church be explained? Is this really fashion or the consequence of mistakes in the education of our youth?

Unexpected reactions to the problems of religon and atheism have also been faced by other newspapers. "Not only youth, but also mature persons are of the opinion that the teaching of scientific atheism violates Soviet law and should thus be no longer included in the curricula of high schools," a professor of philosophy wrote in the Tallinn daily Sowjetskaja Estonia.

In believers' circles one guardedly speaks of a new interest of the youth in religion and Christian values, which is mainly restricted to the intelligentia. Without any doubt the interest of young Russians for Orthodox church symbols is complex: Certainly there is genuine belief, but fashion, anti-conformism and the nostalgia to revitalize old traditions also plays a rôle.

Church sources report that the number of people attending worship services has increased over the past years. This is mainly the case in big towns and in the Province more than in Moscow, even though there are more than 47 open churches here. In some regions the believers have to walk many kilometers to attend a Sunday mass. Sometimes they pray in open churches without a priest. A law from the 1920s provides that a church may be opened if at least 20 members of a community apply for it. According to practicing Christians such requests have very little chances of success.

The number of baptisms has also been steadily increasing over the past years despite reported administrative procedures such as the obligatory registering of the parents' passport. But not all parents, who baptize their children do so out of religious conviction. Some follow the advice of the grandmother, some decide "just like that" and some do it so that their children "do not become sick."

A few years ago there were practically no church marriages. Today some young couples are married in church or at home by a priest, despite the difficulties they then face. The number of church marriages is still relatively small. In church circles one often hears, though, that many young Russians would like to marry in church, even "if it were just because of the nice ceremony."

Marriage in church, the small decoration crosses and the Easter cakes as part of old cultural customs are for many young Russians a means of escaping ideological conformism. But for many others the religious values are the basis for an ethic that is kept in the family and also passed on to others.

These "exterior signs" of religion, whether fashion, anti-conformism or expression of true belief, disturb those responsible for ideology. The official press sees in them an advance of an ideology that is "foreign" to the principles of Soviet society and appeals for a strengthening of ideological education. (EPD Austria)

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## LATIN AMERICAN FATE REFLECTED IN SALVADORAN SITUATION, BRAZILIAN LUTHERANS SAY

SAO LEOPOLDO, Brazil, The fate of the whole of South America is reflected in the dramatic situation of El Salvador, according to students and professors from the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil's (ELCB) theological school here. They have written an open letter to Lutheran World Federation (LWF) member churches in the United States, in which they declare their solidarity with the Salvadoran people and urge the US churches to be conscious of the situation there.

The open letter refers to the ELCB's theme for 1982, "God's earth -- land for everybody" stressing that the church through prayers and actions wants to focus on the needs of the majority of the Brazilians, who have neither access to the land nor its fruits. "It is becoming more and more clear that the people in Latin America have continuously been exploited and decimated in their history. Despite this, grassroots level groups are making progress in their attempts for a more just society. It is urgently necessary that Christians learn how to become involved and to find pleasure in the liberation process," the letter says. It also indicates that the US Lutheran churches are not well enough informed about the suffering and demands for justice of the South American nations.

(M O R E)

The authors of the letter say, "We are worried about the people of El Salvador. The United States are present in that country not only through massive financial means but also through weapons and military advisors. With this contribution they protect their own interests and those of a minority that has taken land which belongs to everybody. This interference is not new. It is historic and chronic."

The threat of such a US intervention is not only limited to El Salvador. A consequence of US politics is the recent military takeover of power in Guatemala, the letter stresses. The US is also involved in destabilizing the Sandinistic revolution in Nicaragua by giving military aid to Honduras and the followers of the former Nicaraguan Somoza regime presently in Honduras, it says.

In view of this situation the professors and students of the ELCB urge the sister churches in the US to pray for the suffering people of El Salvador, to promote respect for a self-determination of the people there and to protest the military intervention and connections of the US in El Salvador and Central America.

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## SOUTH AFRICAN SOLDIERS BREAK UP NAMIBIAN SERVICE, BEAT WORSHIPERS

ELOMBE, Namibia - A Sunday worship service attended by some 600 to 700 people here May 16 was brutally interrupted by South African defense forces, according to a report from Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church (ELOC) Bishop Kleopas Dumeni. He reports that while the service was going on two army trucks pulled up, soldiers got out and immediately surrounded the building. The soldiers then ordered all the people to leave the church and threatened to shoot anyone refusing to leave the church or trying to run away.

Dumeni, who was visiting the congregation at the time, writes that "in a state of great shock and terror-stricken the congregation had to vacate the church abruptly." All the men were assembled at the main entrance and interrogated by the soldiers. Some of the men were so badly beaten and kicked with boots that they were unable to continue with the worship service.

The ELOC church council had recently earmarked May 16 to be a thanksgiving day for the good rain and harvest the Namibians have had this year. Dumeni writes that he has received a report that on this day a similar incident took place at Onayena Parish, approximately 15 km from here. There also people were beaten up and two civilians had to be taken to hospital.

Dumeni reports that when he expressed some concern about the fear of the congregation to the soldiers and asked them to retreat one of the soldiers replied, "We are following the footprints of SWAPO. Why are the people afraid? We are at war and we are fighting for you." Dumeni then told the soldier that he is representing a government which claims to support the principle of religious freedom and "therefore it will be better if you can let us continue with our service in peace." The soldier reacted angrily, saying, "I can shoot all these people dead. It is the Owambo government that has given me the order to do this."

The Namibian bishop writes that the soldiers left after about an hour. Fortunately the congregation was able and willing to continue the service. One of those beaten even prayed for the soldiers, "Forgive them Father, for they do not know what they are doing," Dumeni writes. After two and a half hours the soldiers returned, just as the congregation was leaving the church, but they did not cause more trouble.

Meanwhile Dumeni has protested the incidents in a report sent to the Owambo government, the army and the administrator general of Namibia. He asks several questions including why the South African government, which claims to be Christian, has soldiers that do not have respect for a worship service and why the Owambo government authorizes South African soldiers to interrupt a worship service and beat up worshipers. "I view these actions not as something directed against an individual but rather an affront to God himself and his work," Dumeni writes.

Last month the South African Bishops Conference (SACBC) published a report on the conflict in Namibia that contains allegations of widespread atrocites by members of the South African security forces in the war zone in Northern Namibia. Visitation teams from the British and South African councils of churches have reported similar atrocities in recent months. (Lutheran World Information).

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## SWAZILAND CONSULTATION CALLS FOR WITNESS AGAINST SOCIETAL EVILS

MBABANE, Swaziland -- Development should aim at "the restoration of faith, self-confidence and dignity; just and fair sharing of resources and opportunities; a greater degree of self-reliance in both society and church, and a greater unity of the Lutheran Church giving more credibility to its witness against societal evils." This was expressed by the almost 60 participants in a consultation on development work in Southern Africa, sponsored by the Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Community Development Service (CDS) March 22-27.

The consultation discussed, among other things, the rôle of the church in development and what local churches expect from national councils, the LWF and related agencies. It was said that the church should "be aware of its diaconical responsibility identifying the needs and their root causes, conscientising the community and its authorities, and being itself actively involved in the development of society." It was recommended to help people overcome ignorance, e.g. through literacy and other non-formal education programs and in providing cooperative management skills; to provide scholarships for studies in skills that cannot be obtained in in-service training or within the general education system; to arrange South-South dialogue, and to review church structures that hinder effective implementation of development work.

One of the speakers, Leonore Schiele, focused on the situation of pre-school education in Swaziland, pointing out that of the 50,300 children aged 3-6 only about 3,000 have the chance to attend a pre-school. Schiele noted that most pre-schools are operating without adequate materials to develop children's skills. She said there are several reasons for this, "a. a lack of understanding of the value of educational toys and of how children learn through play. Most adults think of 'education' as learning to read and write the alphabet and do sums; b. a lack of suitable toys. Though shops are well stocked with toys of all kinds these are very much European. There are virtually no 'African' dolls, puzzles, etc. and c. schools have very limited resources as most parents are battling just to survive, with subsistence farming." Schiele said that the signs of undernourishment or mal-nourishment are easily detectable among children. Unless there is "strong motivation to a concerted action of all, pre-schools will continue to struggle for a long time to come," she said.

In an address Swaziland Deputy Prime Minister B.M. Nsibandze told the consultation that the importance of the involvement of church organizations in development efforts of the countries in the Southern Africa region cannot be over-emphasized. He said, "Given the fact that there are limited resources at the disposal of the governments it follows that certain aspects of the economy cannot be catered to. It is at this point that church bodies can cover and provide a supplement to national efforts.

The consultation also pointed to some of the problems and needs in society, e.g., the policy of separate development as "pursued by the South African government and manifested in relocations, migrant labor system, separate education, politcal dispossession, poverty, detentions, the neglect of children, marriage difficulties and one-parent families. The participants "affirmed our greatest joy found in the word of God" and reflected in facts like the independence of Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Botswana and the ability "to share in fellowship and resources both locally and globally in the knowledge that each one of us is created in the image of God."

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## SELF-RELIANCE IS KEY TO DEVELOPMENT, PROFESSOR SAYS

ARUSHA, Tanzania, -- "Self-reliance is a positive force, building on the human resources of a society to invent its own path of development, to use its own innovative capacity in order to solve its own problems," Professor Roy Preiswerk from the Geneva-based Institute of Development Studies told a consultation on "The root causes of social and economic injustice" held here in March. "If external influences hamper this process de-linking should take place. But to merely cut off trade links or take away foreign property, without any internally generated development effort, will not produce any positive consequences," Preiswerk said. He noted that only where a clear definition of what self-reliance is to achieve exists and efforts toward realization are visible, should measures of de-linking from the outside world be adopted.

Preiswerk told the consultation, which was organized by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), that millions of people in the Third World have turned their backs on official development strategies and are trying to improve their living conditions through their own efforts. He have the following example for such a self-help organization: "An old regulation in Cameroon limits government action in water supplies to towns with more than 10,000 inhabitants, a typical illustration of the urban bias in development. Over the last 15 years, thousands of villagers have come out and built their own water installations. They created Village Water Councils, which collected money from each family (for some up to 25% of their annual cash income) and set up a collective work schedule with each member of the community coming out to the construction sites twice a week.

"What they still need is technical advice on the location of the nearest fresh-water source and on the purchase of suitable equipment such as pipes. This they can obtain from a government community-development agency or from foreign-governmental aid organizations. But approximately 80% of the total investment is made up of labor and capital provided by the villagers."

Preiswerk noted that while local self-reliance can more or less function without governments, national self-reliance is an empty word when it is not rooted in local communities. "A nation cannot reduce its dependence on aid, food imports or industrial technology if all groups within the country are not working towards that aim."

In response to Preiswerk' paper, Tanzanian pastor Thomas Musa told the consultation participants that self-reliance as proclaimed at the Tanzanian national level has three main objectives: "1. It is set to ensure that we produce enough to meet domestic needs for both food and consumer goods. This will help the country not to waste the meager foreign exchange to import food and consumer goods, which we can produce in our own country using local resources; 2. It seeks to develop the country's industrial capacity for the processing and semi-processing of export products in the short term strategy. The ultimate aim is to create a base on which the country's industrial sector could be developed to manufacture export goods, and 3. Self-reliance therefore means the creation of a state of mind that promotes confidence in oneself and the ability to determine one's destiny."

Dr. Sibusiso Bengu, secretary for social research in the LWF's department of world service, said that the church could play a leading rôle providing pressure groups to make the public and government aware that "the one world approach towards change means that changes in the South are dependent on changes taking place in the North and vice versa." He said, "As the churches are also full participants in the transfer of resources from North to South they ought to from time to time re-examine their own aid programs. It is only in this way that the church can become a powerful critical force against the general aid practices of the other organizations."

A group of participants at the consultation worked on recommendations aiming at a higher level of self-reliance in the ELCT. Among other things they recommended, "As the church administration is an area that depends heavily upon outside subsidy, the church should give consideration to restructuring its administration and break away from the Western pattern presently followed." The church should identify self-help projects and channel outside support into local communities, the group said.

Another group recommended that the ELCT set up a research bureau to gather, coordinate and disseminate information that will "enable the church to take a stand on socio-economic and political issues that affect people's development." It was stressed that the "main focus in this respect will be to study the external influences and forces that condition development in Tanzania and other Third World countries." The group added that more specifically the rôle of transnational corporations and multinational agencies in the development process would be studied. It said, "As there appears to be a link in the current food production policies in Tanzania with the agri-business Western interests, food research will be given top priority."

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REPORT OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE ROOT CAUSES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INJUSTICE

The results of this consultation in the form of a very good report are available from Dr. Bengu's office. Not too many copies are left, but those who want to have one, mailed free of charge, should write directly to Dr. Sibusiso Bengu, Secretary for Research and Social Action, World Service, Post Box No.66, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

An information bulletin - DEF, Development Education Forum - is also being published by Dr. Bengu's office, and is recommended for subscription.